

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CARACA 04629 200325Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 HA-05 IO-13 CCO-00 /070 W
-----053377 200337Z /70

Z O 192350Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 2365
INFO AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 4629

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - T E X T (P A R A S 1 . & 2 .)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, VE, DR
SUBJECT: DOMINICAN REPUBLIC SITUATION

REF: STATE 127651

1. I SPOKE TO PRESIDENT PEREZ IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIPT OF RETEL. HE WAS ALREADY AWARE OF THE TEXT, WHICH HE TERMED EXCELLENT.

2. PEREZ SAID THAT IN HIS VIEW THE SITUATION IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IS VERY GRAVE, HE IS CONVINCED THAT THE MILITARY WILL IN EFFECT PULL OFF A COUP. I TOLD HIM THAT WE BELIEVED THAT SUCH A DECISION HAD NOT YET BEEN IRREVOCABLY MADE.

3. PEREZ THEN SAID THAT HE KNOWS THAT THE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES WILL PREPARE A BIG PUBLIC EVENT IN HAVANA SUPPORTING THE "DOMINICAN PEOPLE." HE (PEREZ) IS NOT ABOUT TO LET CASTRO GRAB THIS BANNER. HE ALSO BELIEVES THAT IT IS IMPORTANT
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TO PRESENT A FIRM FRONT TO BALAGUER AND THE MILITARY.
THEREFORE, PEREZ SAID HE IS CALLING A PRESS CONFERENCE THIS AFTERNOON (MAY 19) AND WILL MAKE HIS OWN DECLARATIONS. IN ADDITION, HE SAID,
HE IS ORGANIZING A PUBLIC EVENT FOR SUNDAY (MAY 21)
INVOLVING TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, PARTIES, LABOR UNIONS,
EX-PRESIDENTS, ETC., IN DEFENSE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES

IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. THE PURPOSE WILL BE TO DEMONSTRATE SOLIDARITY WITH THE DOMINICAN PEOPLE, AND OPPOSITION TO ANY COUP.

4. I SAID TO PRESIDENT PEREZ THAT I WANTED TO EXPRESS MY CONCERN IN THE STRONGEST TERMS THAT IF ANY SUCH "EVENT" WERE TO APPEAR TO BE A FRONTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC'S AFFAIRS, IT WOULD GIVE BALAGUER AND THE MILITARY AN ESCAPE BY CHARGING "INTERVENTION."

5. PRESIDENT PEREZ SAID THAT HE KNOWS THESE SITUATIONS AND HE KNOWS THE LATINS BETTER THAN WE DO. THE SITUATION IS SERIOUS, AND IT REQUIRES THIS KIND OF "SEIZURE OF THE MORAL GROUND." HE SAID THAT IN HIS OPINION THE US SHOULD HAVE SPOKEN STRONGLY TO BALAGUER IN THE VERY BEGINNING.

HE ASKED ME TO PASS TO WASHINGTON HIS EXTREME CONCERN THAT THIS CAUSE MUST BE SEIZED BY THE DEMOCRACIES BEFORE CASTRO SEIZES THEM. I ASKED THE PRESIDENT AGAIN TO AVOID REACTING TO THE SITUATION IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT WILL BE SEEN AS INFLAMATORY BY BALAGUER AND THE DOMINICAN MILITARY AND THEREFORE GIVE THEM AN OUT.

6. AT 6 P.A. PEREZ SUMMONED PRESS AND (A) REVIEWED HIS EXCHANGE OF MAY 17 WITH BALAGUER; (B) STATED FLATLY THAT GUZMAN HAD WON AND THAT "FRAUD WAS BEING PREPARED;"
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(C) THAT ON BASIS OF OBSERVERS* REPORT HE WAS GOING TO ASK FOR MEETING OF ORGAN OF CONSULTATION; (D) REJECTED THE ARGUMENT THAT IT WAS "INTERVENTION" TO DEFEND THE INTEGRITY OF ELECTORAL PROCESS; (E) SAID THAT IF THE TRUE ELECTION RESULTS ARE DEFRAUDED THIS WOULD BE A GRAVE THREAT TO THE PEACE THE CARIBBEAN. HE ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD HAVE A "CIVIC ACT" SUNDAY, MAY 21. TEXT OF HIS REMARKS ARE BEING FORWARDED SEPTEL.

7. COMMENT: PEREZ HAS THE BIT IN HIS TEETH RIGHT NOW; I HAVE, HOWEVER, ALSO TALKED TO HIS CLOSEST ADVISERS, ESPECIALLY MINISTER LAURIA, AND THE LATTER HAS ASSURED ME THAT HE UNDERSTANDS THE POINT I AM MAKING AND THAT WE COULD BE ASSURED THAT THE SUNDAY "ACT" WILL BE "CALM AND MEASURED." IT WILL, I WAS TOLD, INCLUDE BRIEF STATEMENTS BY EX-PRESIDENTS CALDERA AND BETANCOURT.

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Message Attributes

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